

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4731

USDOC WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

UNCLAS BEIRUT 7370

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP

SUBJECT: C.M. CASSETT PROPOSAL FOR FASHION SHOW

REF: USDOC 08346

1. CHANNING CASSETT CALLED ON EMBASSY IN FOLLOWUP TO MAY 12 LETTER TO MRS. GODLEY REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF STAGING A CHARITY FASHION SHOW IN BEIRUT WHICH WOULD FEATURE WELL KNOWN AMERICAN DESIGNERS.

2. DRESSES DISPLAYED WOULD INCLUDE SAMPLES SUPPLIED BY SEVERAL U.S. DESIGNERS INCLUDING BILL BLASS, OSCAR DE LA RENTA AND JOHN ANTHONY. COST WOULD RANGE FROM A MINIMUM OF \$325 TO \$3,500, WHICH IS NEW YORK RETAIL PRICE. BOAL WOULD BE TO SEE AN AVERAGE OF 50 DRESSES IN EACH OF 8 CITIES TO BE VISITED, AT AVERAGE PRICE OF \$800. THIS WOULD MEAN GROSS SALES OF \$40,000 PER CITY OR TOTAL GROSS OF \$320,000.

3. CASSETT'S EXPENSES INCLUDE DAILY EXPENSES FOR TEN PERSONS, AIRFARES, MODELS' SALARIES AND COMMISSIONS TO LOCAL MERCHANTS ACTING AS SELLING AGENTS. OUR ESTIMATE THESE COSTS FOR THE 50-DAY PERIOD INVOLVED WOULD BE ABOUT \$95,000.

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4. UPON INQUIRY CASSETT VERY EXPLICIT THAT HIS WAS A COMMERCIAL

VENTURE. SAMPLES OF DRESSES TO BE SHOWN ARE TO BE PROVIDED BY DESIGNERS WITH ORDERS TO BE PLACED WITH THEM AFTER THE TOUR JUST AS ANY DRESS MERCHANT IN THE U.S. WOULD ORDINARILY DO.

5. INQUIRY ALSO MADE CLEAR THAT CASSETT'S REFERENCE TO PUTTING ON FASHION SHOW IN CONJUNCTION WITH LOCAL CHARITY INTENDED PURELY AS A SALES PROMOTION UNDERTAKING. CONTRARY TO WHAT HE INDICATED IN HIS MAY 12 LETTER, HE SAID SELECTED LOCAL CHARITY WOULD BEAR RESPONSIBILITY OF PROVIDING DISPLAY FACILITY AT HOTEL OR SIMILARLY SUITABLE PLACE, CHARGING ADMISSION. ANY SURPLUS REMAINING AFTER COVERING COSTS OF DISPLAY FACILITIES WOULD REMAIN WITH LOCAL CHARITY. LOCAL CHARITY HOWEVER WOULD ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR COVERING DISPLAY FACILITY COSTS IN EVENT TICKET SALES INADEQUATE. DEPENDING ON HOW SUCCESSFUL SALE OF DRESSES WAS, CASSETT ADDED THAT HE MIGHT BE PREPARED TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION OF TEN PERCENT THEREOF TO SELECTED CHARITY.

6. CASSETT APPEARS TO BE IN HIS THIRTIES, IS OF MEDIUM SIZE, AND DRESSES MODISHLY AND NEATLY. FROM HIS COMMENTS, HE APPARENTLY WORKED AS A DRESS DESIGNER IN NEW YORK BUT HAS NOW GIVEN THAT UP TO TAKE ON THIS PROJECT. HE IS APPARENTLY NEW TO INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND IN STAGING FASHION SHOWS. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, EMBASSY HAS REFERRED CASSETT TO REPUTABLE LOCAL INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED WITH DRESS MERCHANDISING.

GODLEY

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